

the Trinity and the Incarnation, so that he cannot establish the Christian doctrine in clear opposition to their Hindu and Buddhist analogies. In the same way he does not appear to have a clear metaphysical conception of God and creation or of good and evil. The result is that the most important distinctions on which the whole argument turns are often left confused. Everything really turns on the problem of transcendence and immanence. Is God absolutely transcendent and an object of worship as the Christian, the Jew and the Muslim maintain, or is he immanent in such a way that all distinctions disappear in the ultimate reality? Mr Smart never succeeds in establishing the case for the 'Semitic' view or in showing how the Hindu and Buddhist view of immanence can be reconciled with it.

The view which he presents needs to be corrected by the analysis of Christian experience which is given by Dr Cuttat in his *Encounter of Religions*, which was reviewed in a recent number of *BLACKFRIARS*. In this study Dr Cuttat really penetrates to the heart of the problem. Mr Smart has nevertheless presented the problem with considerable understanding and in a way which makes it a delight to read.

BEDE GRIFFITHS O.S.B.

IRRATIONAL MAN By William Barrett; Heinemann; 21s.

It surely cannot be true that William Barrett is 'one of America's most original philosophic thinkers', though this is what it says on the dust-cover of this book. He is a former editor of *Partisan Review*, the lively and left-wing organ of the American intelligentsia, and his principal office there, at least in the immediately post-war years, was to play the polyglot chaperon of European culture to the innocent and fascinated American. Something of this comes out even now, when he has become a respectable professor—speaking of Buber, for instance, he confides that 'this old rabbi has wonderful instincts and he has sniffed out where the trouble really lies.' We are also informed that existential psycho-analysis, Sartre's invention, 'has already caught on somewhat in Europe.'

The book is meant for Americans. This is not said disparagingly, though it is meant for them so much and so painfully that it is hard to see why it has been brought over here. It is basically a sincere and committed effort to analyse and remedy what Mr Barrett takes to be the complete moral and spiritual impotence of American society. The first section of the book sets all this out, in very general terms; and the concluding section recommends some integration of the non-intellectual potencies of human life into the dominant intellectuality which is supposed to have brought about the present appalling situation. We must realise that man is *more than merely rational*—hence the title; and that our non-intellectual powers represent some of our primary moral resources.

We can do this particularly by studying Kierkegaard and Heidegger. The centre of the book is taken up with a survey of philosophy, most of which is maddeningly superficial, inaccurate and patronising, and in which almost anybody who has ever admitted any limits to what human reason can do counts at

least as a precursor of existentialism. The survey improves as it reaches our own time, and by far the best part of the whole book is the essay on Heidegger. Even here the tone remains that of literary tourism, but the explanation of what is meant by *Dasein* and of how Heidegger uses the term to get out of the snares laid by Descartes in the philosophical discussion of human existence, is the most intelligible account that has so far emerged in English. We are invited to consider thinking as thanking, but this is the only piece of original philosophic thinking that occurs in the book, and it has been anticipated by Heidegger.

This is not enough to save the book from being thoroughly unsatisfactory.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

LET'S HAVE SOME POETRY By Elizabeth Jennings; Museum Press Ltd; 12s. 6d.

This book is meant for the young, for roughly the thirteen to seventeen year old, and is based on the very sensible view that although you cannot teach anyone to write poetry, you can teach them to appreciate it, that the best way to show them how to appreciate it is to show them how it comes to be written and encourage them to try, and that if they seem to have any real gift or urge you can give them at least practical advice. All these things Miss Jennings does admirably. On the one hand she makes plain the various elements that go to make up a poem, form, imagery, subject, genre, choosing her examples from a very wide area and including young poets of the present day, and on the other, by means of quotations from the reflections of poets themselves and from her own experience, she helps us to understand how poets come into being and how they work, even how being a poet can be a vocation. Perhaps the most outstanding virtue of the book is the sanity and balance of her advice to the young and particularly to the adolescent on the way to go about it, the necessity of hard work and good reading and the kind of help and criticism to look for. Miss Jennings' own standing as a poet guarantees the soundness of her advice and her own kindness shines encouragingly through the book.

B.W.

MEN OF DESTINY By Sir Stephen King-Hall; K-H Services, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1; 18s.

This is the age of the cartoon. Sir Stephen King-Hall now offers us over 200 pages of cartoons in words, with a purpose desperately serious. Readers of his news letters, of his books and pamphlets, all his T.V. fans will want to possess this book, already of historical interest: for it 'guys' pomposity in high places so kindly and effectively that it may prove the nuclear warhead on the missile of his strategic books.

The cartoon figures—Mr Kennix (USA), Mr Mackall (Britain), Mr Buglov (Russia) and His Excellency Etienne Gallique revolve round the sun of Tanya, Olga, Subayova. (Was it not Mr Eisenhower who suggested that governments